A COMPLAINT TO THE House of Commons,

AND

Reſolution taken up by the free Proteſtant Subjects of the Cities of *London* and *weſtminſter*, and the Counties adjacent.

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A Complaint to the Houſe of COMMONS, and Reſolution taken up by the free Proteſtant Subjects of the Cities of London and Weſtminſter, and the Counties adjacent.

FOoſers may ſpeak by authority of a Proverb, and then we are ſure we ought not to be ſilenced; we have ſeen and peruſed many Remonſtrances, Declarations, Votes & Ordinances, & our vote upon them all is, That it had been happy for us, more advantagious to our Religion, & more honourable to our Nation, if they had been ſtrangled in the birth, and never walked abroad in the light, & that it will never be well with us, or the Kingdome, till they be buried in oblivion: for we find ſo much bitterneſſe and aſperity in ſome, ſo many jealouſies and feares raiſed in others, ſo little truth in many, and ſo much danger in them all, that we may juſtly feare ſome Conjurers have been abroad to raiſe evill ſpirits; and that we ſhall never be at quiet, till they be under ground. We have lived to ſee many changes in Church and State, as make our hearts ake, becauſe for the moſt part they are ſtill for the worſt, and when we could not beleeve a degree beyond our miſeries, and thereupon built hopes of amendment, our ſenſe of ſuffering taught us new degrees of compariſon; we will inſtance in a few, and by them gheſſe at the reſt (for we like not generalls, no more then letters teſtimoniall of credit without a name to owne them.) It is granted of all hands we are free Subjects, borne to the Lawes of the Kingdome as our birth-right, which we may challenge of right, and that we maintain the Proteſtant Religion againſt Popery, and all other Sects and Hereſie, and that the Litrugy of the Church is eſtabliſhed by Act of Parliament. We beſeech you now conſider how we were uſed in all theſe; Our eſtates were taken away under the gentle termes of Benevolences and Loanes, where the choice was, either to part with our Eſtates and Land, or lye

in Prison: When we found this oppressure, we ran to the Law for protection, and found by woefull experience that innocence was a worse crime then felony; for he that was committed for felony was admitted to baile, whilest he that was committed for no cause was upon his *Habias Corpus* remanded and continued in Prison: Thus it fared with us in our Liberties, and not much better in our Property, for what with charge of Armes and Musters (where the Lord Lieutenants, or Deputy Lieutenants spleen or will made a Law) and billetting Souldiers and the like, what we enjoyed was at the will of others rather then our own; and beleeve it our lives were in no small hazard, when Martiall Law was so freely talked of: These were no small losses to make men speak; but wee silently suffered, and not long after came our Petition of Right, which re-invested us in our legall inheritance again, and as we thought had setled us in that happinesse which was immovable; but experience soon taught us the contrary, for a way was found out to create offences by Proclamation. and and a Court that could make any thing an offence at their pleasure, and punish it how they list, where great Lords could more easily impose five or 10000. l. fine for a new made offence, then pay the tenth part of such a summe for their own just Debts; and to make their sentences more severe, could finde out new Prisons, and close imprisonment to separate the distressed from their friend, yea and whip men too, & inflict on her corporall punishment, which is not pleasing to us in the remembrance: Nay, it was grown to such a height of naughtinesse, that the base Projectors and Monopolizors (the bane of the Common-wealth) made use of that Court of Justice (if so we may call it) to uphold their villany (let that stinging Sope Project witnesse whether we speak truth or not.) And as if we could not have been undone soon enough, we had a Master Project invented, to submit all our estates to the Kings pleasure by a new devised Ship-writ, whereby the King might make a necessity at pleasure, and then impose what he thought fit, which after it had been hatched & contrived by some over-learned wicked brains, was countenanced under a pretext of Law by the Judges, (in mentioning

of which we intend not either *Walter*, *Hutton*, or *Crooke*, who are dead, or *Crew*, who is yet living, for their memories are precious with us for honeſt men) and this was proſecuted with no ſmall violence (as many other projects beſides) by the Kings Counſell at Law, who may bluſh for ſhame, or at leaſt quake for fear, to think how they miſ-led a good King and their gracious Maſter, to the grievance of his beſt Subjects. It afflicts us to think of the preſſures we underwent by new impoſts and that involuntary dangerous preſident of exciſe of 40.s.*per Tonne* upon wine, beſides divers other grievances. And yet all theſe paſt currant under the ſpecious and plauſible pretence of the Subjects good, (which Mr *Attorney* Generall found, and ſo expreſt it in his Study) but we found the quite contrary in experience. And as our troubles were thus multiplyed in the Common-wealth, ſo did they no leſſe encreaſe in the Church; we had new devices leading faſt on towards Popery. It began under the faire pretence of orderly ſervice of God by railing in the Communion Table, providing Church-ornaments, and the like, (which we are ſo farre from condemning, that we ſhould have had cauſe to thank them if they had ſtaid there) for we wel approve of harmleſſe & inoffenſive Ceremonies, and decent form of Gods worſhip & Service) but what with their new Chriſtning, our Communion-Tables to make them Altars, ſetting them Altar-wiſe at the upper end of the Chancell, advancing them upon ſteps, in ſome places changing them from wood ro ſtone, ſetting up Crucifixes, & then bowing & cringing, and the bold Sermons for auricular confeſſions; free-will, merit, reall preſence in the Papiſticall ſenſe, and ſuch other ſtuffe; we could not well tell where they would reſt untill they had brought in the Idoll of the Maſſe, Image-worſhip, and the like, and made the Archbiſhop of *Canterbury* equall to a Pope in *England*, who to our griefe had obtained that command in Church and State, and that power at Counſell Board, Star-chamber, and High-Commiſſion, (beſides his under-hand awing the Common Law Judges to betray the Law to his will) that he Lorded it all the Kingdome over, and by the aſſiſtance of ſome of his under Biſhops (as bad as himſelfe) and others more eaſie to be

wrought upon, he brought the Clergy (ſome few godly Miniſters excepted) (who then by way of diſgrace were termed Puritans, and now Popiſhly affected Malignants) to be at his Command, who preached (or rather prated) nothing but blinde obedience, and the Kings Prerogative, and ſuch things as they underſtood not, to make us odious to our Prince, and raiſe themſelves to preferment (which was too ready a way in thoſe times to accompliſh their deſires.) We would not be miſtaken, as if we did inveigh againſt Archbiſhops, or Biſhops, or bore *ill will* to the Clergy in generall, we like well of their dignities and orders, and there are many among them, who by their pious Preaching, gracious lives, godly examples, and orderly Government in the Church, have been great inſtruments of our good, and by their depth of knowledge and lerning, ſtopt the mouthes of Papiſts, Schiſmatiqnes, and Heretiques, we pray for them, and that God would encreaſe the number of them, and if it had not been thought otherwiſe fit by the State, we ſhould never have denied the Biſhops a place in the Lords Houſe in Parliament, and hope they ſhall yet conrinue to have a name and fit power of Government in the Church, though their Votes in Parliament be gone, (which for the manner of carriage in taking them away (if all be true that we hear) was not ſo well as we could have wiſhed for the hononr of that Great Court which we ſhall labour to uphold.) By this time we preſume you will think we may ſpeak to the pnrpoſe, for our loſſes were not ſmall; if the loſſe of Propety, Liberty, Life, or Religion be great. But you will object, Theſe were not loſt, onely in hazard, and that all theſe are now put out of danger, by aboliſhing Ship-money, and all other things of that nature, and by orher good Bills paſſed this Parliament, and a Bill ready to be paſſed for a Synod, if the King will give His aſſent. To which we anſwer, and acknowledge the goodneſſe of the King, thar he did not extend His Power in the caſe of Ship-money to that latitude, when time was (as our Judges put into His Power) and when He was adviſed by His Great Counſell it was againſt Law, He yeelded to aboliſh it. Wee confeſſe His Grace to us in the Bill for the Triennial Parliament, and in regulating His

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Counſell Table, and putting down His Court of Star-chamber, and High Commiſſion, and other good and profitable Lawes, conſented to by Him, and made for us this Parliament; and we bleſſe God we have ſuch a King, and pray heartily for His long life, and happy Raign over us, and publiſh to all the World, that we doe from our hearts acquit Him from the guilt of all our ſufferings, and a thought in any of us of his inclination to Popery, and wiſh, that thoſe who are in Authority under Him would learn goodneſſe by His example, and that the whole Kingdom were as ſound in the Proteſtant Religion, but yet withall, we muſt let Him and all the World know too, that our condition at preſent is ſo far from being bettered, that is grown extreamly worſe, as if all the evils of former times had been epitomized into the Volume of a yeare laſt paſt or thereabouts, and the quinteſſence of ours and the former Ages grievances extracted and given us at one draught: It is true we had a Parliament called before this, one which our hopes depended much for redreſſe of our evils, and how unhappily it ended we too ſenſibly feele. Whether he that is dead, or the late Comptroller that is living (and would have ſet that unvendible commodity of Ship-mony to ſale in that Parliament for 12. Subſidies) were the cauſe of it, we judge not, nor condemne any. And it is as true this Parliament to our thinking was called ſeaſonably for our reliefe; and the unhappy differences ariſen in *Scotland*, almoſt miraculouſly qnieted, and our Brethren of that Nation returned home peaceably (though we muſt not forget that it coſt us 300000.l. beſides the many thouſands weekly their Army and ours had for their ſupport here, which we could wiſh had had been ſpared.) And we ought likewiſe to acknowledg (for it is a truth not to be denied) the care both Houſes of Parliament have taken for ſuppreſſing Popery, diſcountenancing Miniſters Popiſhly affected, and the many expreſſions they have made for maintaining our Proteſtant Religion and Lawes; But for all this, we have now more cauſe to complain then ever. At the beginning of this Parliament they removed one highly charged for endeavouring the ſubverſion of the Fundamentall Lawes of the Land, and many other Treaſons,

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which how far guilty we determine not, becauſe we heard no evidence, and though we are ſure he was a great cauſe of our ſufferings, yet we could wiſh his Attainder might have been in ſuch manner, as others taking notice of his puniſhment, might have feared to commit the like crimes, and not ſo to puniſh, as to need a Declaration, that his manner of puniſhment ſhould not be drawne into example afterwards (the ready way to draw a ſuſpition upon the Juſtice of his ſentance) but if our Fundamentall Lawes be all ſubverted, what doth his puniſhment advantage us? The Houſes likewiſe took care for committing the Arcbiſhop of *Canterbury* to the Tower, Judge *Bartly* to the Sheriffs of *London*, Sir *George Ratcliffe* to the Gatehouſe, and all theſe for no leſſe crimes then High Treaſon; but we are aſhamed to think that they ſhould lie in Priſon above two yeeres together without a legall triall, (which will be a fair juſtification of all our Judges of inferiour Courts for delay of Juſtice, and no ſmall injury to the free Subjects of *England* in the precedent to be deprived of their Liberty ſo long upon a bare ſurmiſe) nay we heare (but will give no preſent credit to it for the honour of both Houſes) that one of the Judges of the Kings Bench is kept Priſoner in the Tower for no cauſe at all expreſt, (or any juſt one that we can learn;) and Judge *Bartly* that lies under the impeachment of High Treaſon, appointed by both Houſes to ſit Judge againe in that Court, which if it be true, we muſt plainly tell you, that we feare the Impeachment againſt him (as well againſt halfe a dozen more of his brothers, that never proceeded further then an accuſation) was rather to awe them, and make them ſerve turnes upon occaſion, (keeping them under the laſh) then out of zeale of Juſtice, or for the common good.

Nay, we have good advertiſement, (for we are not ſo well acquainted in the Priſons, as to know by ſight) of many hundreds committed by both Houſes this Parliament (where by the way we ſhould be glad to know how the Houſe of Commons, being onely part of the Body of the Great Counſell, and no Court of Record, heve got a power to commit ſuch as are none of their Members) (for wiſe men and good Lawyers

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queſtion it) we ſay many hundred committed, and not one convicted except the Lord Major Sir *Richard Gurney*, *Binion*, and the now Kings Attorney; for the latter of which we are not ſo wiſe as to underſtand his fault, being a high point of new-Parliament Priviledge, which his Judges could not by a known Law ſuddenly finde any puniſhment for; and for *Binion* let it reſt upon the conſciences of his Judges, whether he were guilty of the crimes charged by good proof; but this we muſt ſay that we are not ſatisfied, but that he ought to have been tried by twelve Free-men upon their Oathes, according to the Great Charter of *England*, and not by the Lords, who are not our equals: and for the ſentence it ſelfe wee have ſo juſt cauſe of complaint, that if ſuch arbitrary juſtice proceed, we ſhall finde little eaſe by transferring the Star-chamber from one end of *Weſtminſter* Hall, to the Lords Houſe at the other; and it will be much alike to be committed by the Star-chamber to *Carnarvon* Caſtle, and the Lords Houſe to *Colcheſter* Gaole, and much worſe to be committed during the pleaſure of that Houſe, then the Kings, for we finde him more inclinable to mercy, (though we wonder much how the King loſt a power of pardoning, or ſhewing mercy in any crime whatſoever, that did not concern a particular Subject.) And for the honeſt Lord Major *Gurney*, if you will beleeve us (and many of us were preſent at his triall) hee might with more honour and juſtice too, have been acquited then ſentenced, his greateſt fault being his obedience to his King, and true ſervice to the City according to his Oath and Duty of his place. If theſe things be true, it will make us feare ſome body ſhares with the Serjant at Arms Meſſengers, and Gaolers in the fees, and that little care is taken of the Subjects Liberty in the mean time. It may be thought theſe things nothing concern us, but beleeve it there is more in it then ſo: that which is one Subjects caſe now, may be ours, or our childrens hereafter; and a bad precedent is many times of great authority, and dangerous conſequence, which wee are the more ſenſible of, becauſe we hear ſome ignorant Lawyers of the Houſe of Commons (one of which weares a ſcarlet-hood, which he paid dear for, and was held none of the wiſeſt the beginning of this

Parliament) are pickt out to finde precedents, and justifie by Law the legality of sequestring mens estates and inheritances, to turn the King out of His Power, of making Sheriffes of Counties, and put that in the people, and by consequence deduce it to themselves; nay some (whom wee blush for) have not beene ashamed to put in print a precedent for deposing a King, and could finde no better then King *Richard* the second, who all the world knows (to the scandall of this Nation was traiterously murthered, the whole progresse of which Act was a horrid Treason, upon the faireſt relation of any Chronicle.) And therefore wee beseech you blame us not, if wee here by way of exception make mention of them, that they may not hereafter be cited to the prejudice of us and our posterity. Wee crave leave now to lay down truly and plainly (for our condition is such that we must not palliate) the redresse of our grievances by this Parliament. Indeed, wee acknowledge a great deale of zeale of the House in Commons in questioning Projectors, Monopolizors, and the like, but it was too hot to continue, for we do not know of one of them to this day punished: Nay *Kilvert* that grand Projector in the 40. s. *per Tonne* excise, so far from punishment, as our great Masters of the House of Commons were not ashamed to make use of his skill (who is knowne to be very dextrous to oppresse) to have drawn all the poor Vintners of *London* to make Fine and Ransome, and if they have escaped, they may thank their poverty, and not their innocence: how this comes to passe wee know not; but this we know, that Alderman *Abel* (*Kilverts* Comrade in that businesse) was a rich man (and the King gives a hint, as if one of the House of Commons (a crying sin, if it be true, could take mony) and whether *Kilvert* or *Abel* made friends there, and so got off (for it is too too evident, that there is notable friending there in causes, both at Committees and in the House) or whether in the examination of that businesse they stumbled upon some Grandee, or others as deep in that project as they, wee cannot tell: but sure wee are, they are at liberty, and unpunished, when many of our honest brethren, and free Subjects are kept in Prison for maintaining their rights by Law.

A great adoe was made about the Customers for their exacting Customes and Impoſts, but the concluſion of that buſineſſe, ſhews plainly the Houſe of Commons aimed meerly to get money, for the Customers purchaſed their peace of them (which phraſe ſounds ill in a place of Juſtice) and now the Houſe of Commons againſt expreſſe Law exact the like Customes and Impoſts, which they diſpoſe at pleaſure, and think an Order of both Houſes a diſpenſation to that *Premunire* in their Act of Parliament, which wee feare will ſcarce upon a fair and legall triall excuſe: What think you of the Project of ſealing Gold and Silver Thred and Wire (which the poor Artiſts about *London* ſo much cried out upon?) If any body hath beene puniſhed for that abuſe, it is more then we could ever heare; yet we, and both Houſes too know, that great Lord of the Houſe of Peeres, and Sir *H. Mildmay* ſtill of the Houſe of Commons, that dipt their fingers deep in it; nay, and though the King gives a gentle reproofe for it, wee ſee nothing done thereupon, which makes us beleeve, that it was not altogether pure Juſtice in voting out all Monopoliſts and Projectors, &c. out of the Houſe of Commons, and yet ſo notorious a one kept in; nay by your leave we can tell you who eſcaped turning out upon the loane of 50000l. which was ill news to us, to think that Houſe could be hired with mony; and yet we have wiſhed ſince, that all the Members of the Houſe had beene as able to furniſh money as he; for then peradventure many as wiſe and as honeſt, and of as cleare repute in the Common-wealth, (though the man is free from exception) which have beene Voted out without any cauſe, might peradventure have ſate there ſtill, and by their wiſdome and moderation (if that bee of weight there) prevented many ſudden unadviſed Votes, which will ſcarce be for the honour of Parliaments in ſucceeding ages. And ſince we are thus unhappily fallen into the Houſe, we muſt (though by digreſſion) let you know how ſenſible wee are in apprehending the truth of His Majeſties Declaration in the undue courſes of election of Knights and Burgeſſes, and as undue in turning out thoſe duly elected, and putting worſe in their rooms; and the notable ſiding and making Parties thereabouts, inſomuch as the

Committee for election, hath got the Nickname of the Committee of affection, where every one is more for his friend, then the right; and if all the House of Commons bee Judges (as they pretend to be) wee can change every one of them with such sollicitation and pre-instruction in causes and engagements to a party, as were enough to turn any other Judge of England out of his place, and forfeit all his estate; and that justly too.

We would be glad to know what was the cause of turning the L. *Faulkland*, Sir *John Culpepper*, Sir *Io. Strangwaies*, Master *G. Palmer*, and divers others out of the Houses (for they were voted out by scores hand over head) unlesse it were because they spake more reason then the more violent party could answer; and therefore it was come to that passe, that (cleane contrary to the use, yea, and the honour of Parliaments too) things were not debated by reason and strength of Argument, but by putting it to the question, and carrying it by most voyces, where the greater number were so farre from understanding many times the force of Arguments, that they did not after the vote was past conceive the state or sense of the question, but thought it was enough for them to vote with Master *Pym*, or Master *Hampden* by an implicite faith; and if they differed (as seldome they did) then crosse or pyle, vote at adventure: doe not thinke wee are too bold herein, or this is breach of priviledge; for when these things are told abroad (and it were pity they should bee concealed, lest they should not bee amended.) Blame not us for complaining of them, when we suffer so much by them; and if it be a breach of priviledge, we hope we shall escape as well as Master *Laurence Whictakers*, the late Clerke of the Councell, for a farre greater, who searcht Master *Hampdens* pockets, and tooke away his papers loone after the breach of the last Parliament, and yet now continued a Member of the House of Commons. Indeed, we heare much complaint touching the breach of Parliament priviledge, principally that touching the Lord *Kimbolton*, and the five Members of the House of Commons, and we so farre dislike the Kings going to the House of Commons, as wee take it to be against the priviledge of Parliament,

ment, and with with all our hearts it had been forborne: But after the King hath given so full satisfaction therein, and in plain termes made an acknowledgement thereof (a rare thing in a Prince) that it should still be mentioned (as if all errours in a King were never to be forgotten) wee must needs thinke there is not that care of preserving the Kings honour, and desire of unity betweene him and his people, as all honest men wish for, and that the King's faults are nothing neere so many as are pretended, that this must be so often reiterated to make up a number. And yet by the way we must hint thus much, if that Lord or five Members be guilty of Treason, wee shall not sticke to convict those five Members, and see them duly executed, according to the old Law; for we never heard that any Parliament man had a priviledge of Parliament in his triall of Treason till this Parliament, and wee meane not to uphold new created priviledges. Surely, breach of Parliament priviledge is not a sinne unpardonable (if it be) it will fare ill with some of both Houses that discovered the difference of opinion by some of the House of Commons by name, in the businesse of the late Earle of *Strafford*, and the well-affected Lords in the House of Peeres in the businesse of the Church Liturgy. I and with all the rabble of Brownists and Anabaptists, that with unheard of impudence durst aske the question publikely at the Barre in the House of Commons, who they were which opposed the well-affected party in that House, (a thing unpresidented) and that more noble persons of the House of Commons, that did not sticke to aske the like question in the House of the LORDS (though wee charge not that upon his score (blame to them that injoyned him that taske.) Nay, what shall become of the multitude of the zealous Sectaries, and rabble of ignorant people sent to both Houses, but specially to the House of Peeres by Captaine *Ven* and his wife, and *Isaac Pennington*, to cry Justice, Justice, and; No Bishops, No Bishops, and to terrifie some Lords from the House, and awe others that were there; wee can finde no way but a pardon, or an Act of oblivion: for we are sure there were never higher breaches of Parliament priviledge then these, nor a greater staine upon

Parliament proceedings, God grant they riſe not up in judgment againſt us and the Nation. We are loth to rub too hard upon this ſore, wee know it is a tender place, elſe wee could tell ſtrange things done this Parliament, not only *ex tempore* Votes, but Bills paſſe *ex tempore* the ſame day they were firſt read, contrary to the gravity and reaſon of all former times, as if they could as well vote and make Acts of Parliament by the ſpirit *ex tempore*, as their Levites can pray and preach, and to ſay the truth, are much alike, which makes religious and wiſe men aſhamed of both, and is no ſmall cauſe of our complaint. Let no man think this a buſineſſe of no concernment to us, it is no leſſe then our loſſe of Parliaments (whereby we ſhall loſe all our happineſſe) if we loſe the honour, wiſdome, gravity and juſtice of them: and we muſt complaine till we ſee amendment, and muſt crave pardon of our noble Lords to tell them, that we ſee (what they know to be true) ſo much ſiding and engaging one another in their Committees in matters of civill juſtice, that if there were a ſuperiour Court to complaine unto of what they have miſdone this Parliament (beſides the many delayes and protractions of cauſes) whileſt thoſe who ſhould attend to heare and judge, are in bed, or at play, or ſome worſe employment, or idle at the beſt) our Judges of inferiour Courts (whom we formerly complained of, and not without cauſe) would be reckoned little gods by way of compariſon; and few of their beſt Orders are worth the charge of artendance, and Lawyers and Clerkes fees. And ſurely when things are thus carried, we have cauſe to ſpeake, but the worſt is yet behind; for as (if our Parliament (which was wont to redreſſe all our grievances) envied our happineſſe, and ſtudied our ruine) they have found out a new way to deprive us of our Lawes, Liberty, and Property. This may be thought very ſtrange at the firſt ſight, but we ſhall ſo plainly demonſtrate it, as we doubt not, but the (Parliament men themſelves being reaſonable Judges) it will be aſſented unto for an undeniable truth; and it will bee evident to every ordinary underſtanding, that under the pretence of defending our Lawes and Religion, wee are cozened of both: To begin with our Lawes (and follow them for the preſent, though in

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an ill preſident, in putting Religion at the fagge end, when other buſineſſe is done) we have got a new Law of Ordinances ſo called, that hath turned all our Liberties, Property, Petition of right, and all other old known and rightfull Laws out of doors; & if we continue ſo ſimple longer to ſubmit to them, the free Subjects of England ſhall be in worſe condition then a Turkiſh ſlave: whileſt they are at the mercy of one, we at the pleaſure and command of hundreds, to diſpoſe our lives, liberties, eſtates, wives and children, yea and our Religion too according to their humours. The firſt time we found this ſtealing in upon us, was in the buſineſſe of the *Militia*, which we ſwallowed without any examination of the legality, being driven into amazement with feares of ſome ſudden and unavoidable danger; and blame us not, if we were apprehenſive thereof upon printed relations of ſo many pretended horrid treacheries againſt the Parliament, when every day almoſt produced a diſcovery of a new treaſon: That of the Taylors in Moore fields; the ſtable of Horſes under ground; the Daniſh Fleet that was diſcomfited by *Van Trump* along time ſince, beſides other ſtrange diſcoveries & letters that came God knows from whence; for the Authors may be aſhamed to be knowne, and ſuch like fictions, that ſerved only to amaze us, whileſt in the mean time we yeilded to that illegall power put in the Lievtenants of the *Militia*, thinking only thereby to defend our ſelves from a preſent Force; but we find now that it is, and hath bin put in execution to diveſt our King of his Forts, Townes, Caſtles, Navies, Goods and Revenues, and to put the ſtrength of the Kingdome in the power and command of poore men of deſperate fortunes or factions, & Schiſmaticall men addicted to Anabaptiſme and Browniſme: Look amongſt the *London* Commanders, from *Fouk*, *Normington*, and other the Princes of the *Militia*, by Col: *Ven* and *Manwaring*, as low as Captaine *Bradly* and *Baſte* (if bankrupting be a badge of poverty) and compare the reſt of the Liſts, and for one honeſt able Commander you will find more then twice as many Schiſmaticall beggarly Sectaries; indeed, ſome are men of worth; elſe the cheat had bin too groſſe. We confeſſe we were not ſo

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ſenſible as diſcretion would have taught us of the taking of *Hull* from the King, and ſeiſing his Armes there, and little thought his Declaration was a true propheſie that our turnes would be next: Wee never dreamt, that any under pretext of Religion, or preſenting a Petition to our King, would have aſſaulted his Royall Perſon, as at *Keinton*, an act which wee diſavow to the preſent age, and all ſucceeding generations) we could not have beleeved, if we had not tried it by wofull experience, that our horſes and goods ſhould have been taken away againſt our wills by *Iſaac Pennington*, or any his officers; that ſouldiers ſhould have been billetted in our houſes perforce, nay and Martiall law voted to be put in execution by two Houſes of Parliament, and that ſitting a Parliament, and whileſt other Courts of Juſtice, Aſſiſes, Seſſions, and the Courts of Weſtminſter were all open, we wonder where the new offences of Malignants and ill-affected, and men not to be confided in, are to be found in our Law? and what puniſhment is due to them? And we no leſſe wonder how it was poſſible that noble Lord (whom we took to be our Patron in defence of our Religion and Laws) was drawn in, or brought on to be Generall of an Army againſt our King, and to be an inſtrument of ſo much miſchief to us; & how thoſe brave Lords, *Northumberland, Warwick, Holland, Bedford, Salisbury, Howard*, and honeſt *Pembrook*, with ſome other honeſt Lords, and the remnant of honeſt and wiſe men left in the Houſe of Commons could be led on all this while, and not diſcover the miſery that was brought upon us and our poſterity by this new found Law? It is too late now to prevent what is paſt, and it is ſome comfort to us to heare that they underſtand, and are ſenſible of our ſufferings and dangers, and endeavour to prevent them; but unleſſe a ſpeedy courſe be taken, wee ſee our ruine ſo imminent, that wee muſt fall to put our reſolutions in practice: as if all the former grievances were too little (putting in the plundering of houſes, and more then barbarous cruelty in the unheard of tortures which the Parliament Forces uſed to ſome of our neighbours (old *Beſt* of *Canterbury*, and Sir *William Botelers* man of *Kent*, and others for inſtance of the latter, and his Maſter, and hundred houſes more plundered

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by them for proofe of the former.) There is now another ſo named Ordinance for taking away the twentieth part of our eſtates, and proviſion by additionall ſo called Ordinances to levie it by diſtraining our goods, impriſoning our perſons, and turning our wives, children and families out of doores, which when wee firſt peruſed, wee concluded with our ſelves, that either thoſe which made it were not well in their wits, or did beleeve all the Subjects of *England* but themſelves fools, to ſuffer it to be put in execution. We are much engaged to our King (as for many other favours) ſo particularly for that his laſt Declaration of the eighth of December, by way of anſwer to that pretended Ordinance, and his charge not to obey it. And we find his good advertiſements in other his Declarations too true (wee wiſh wee had heeded them better in time) but wee muſt with all humility let him and every one elſe know, that from the firſt peruſall of that Ordinance wee were reſolved to oppoſe it to the death: we found it evident enough, that they might by the like new law take the other nineteenth part of our eſtates when they pleaſed, and our lives too. And hey of the Houſe of Commons were much miſtaken, who thought it a favour to us in ſparing our lives in this; for hee is t poore ſpirited man that would chuſe to live in a priſon, and ee his eſtate taken from him, and his wife and children turned begging, and baniſhed: And therefore wee muſt now deale roundly for the truth, as others have done for wrong. Wee would faine know how long it is ſince the making law by Ordinance was in uſe; for ſome of us (as old as ſince the beginning of Queen *Elizabeths* time) never knew it till this Parliament. Indeed, we have heard of ſuch things that were of ancient times (and it may be lawfull too) but cannot yet learne by any good Antiquary or Lawyer, that both Houſes of Parliament, without the Kings conſent, did make an Ordnance to bind the free Subjects of *England* in their lives, liberty, or eſtates. If an Order of both Houſes may make new Law, or abrogate or ſuſpend our old, you may quickly ſeiſe upon all our eſtates, and beſtow them amongſt your ſelves and friends; and you have ſhewn us a good inclination that way, in beſtowing 6000.li. upon your Speaker of the Houſe of Com-

mons, and places of command, and no small profit in the Army upon Members of both Houses, their children, kinred, and friends, which for their skill in warre might as well have been spared in the Army: As for Councell in the House, witnesse those grave and valiant Lords, *Hastings*, *Rochford*, *&c.* And we could never learn of any great experience of Martiall valour in my Lord *Say*, or his son (that had the fleet unruly horse) to draw them so conscienciously to undertake imployments of that nature. But wee find little conscience made of taking pluralities of Command in the Army (a Regiment of foot, and Troop of horse) and stay at home and take the pay, which comes out of our purses, and complaine of lazie Ministers for pluralities of Church livings: We like not the latter, and we do as much condemne the former.

We thought we should have had thanks given to such of us as had been wrought upon to bring in our plate, and lend mony to the Parliament, more then wise men would have done; and that it had been an impossibility that ever the quantity and proportion should have been questioned, and a taxe follow. Will our great Lords and others of great estates in both Houses part with the twentieth part (so roundly?) Our choice it seemes is now as in the beginning, differs onely in this, There lend, or go to prison, Here lend, or take and sell our goods, put our persons in a Gaole, turne wives and children out of doores, and banish them.

What is become of our Petition of Right? what use of a Trienniall Parliament? If this last but a few dayes at this rate, we shall have never a Free-holder of 40.s. a yeare left to chuse Knights, nor a free Citizen but in a prison. We wonder that this new kind of Ordinance was not sooner found out. It would have spared the trouble of getting the Kings assent to many Bills. Why was not *Strafford* kill'd with an Ordinance? the Bishops discharged out of the Lords House with an Ordinance? and this Parliament made everlasting by an Ordinance? What dull unlearned men were Sir *Edw. Coke*, *Phillips*, *Ellyot*, *Digs*, *Sands*, *&c.* that could never find or devise this knack of forging new Lawes in former Parliaments?

The rule you make is; That an Order of both Houses, which

which you miſ-cal an Ordinance, binds us during the Parliament. If you had but made, or doe yet make ſuch an Order, this Parliament can never diſſolve, and we muſt re-call our thanks for our Triennial Bill, for we ſhal be made uncapable of taking fruit by it. Seeing you are pleaſed to proceed thus farre, we beſeech you make one Ordinance more. That both Houſes ſhall be a Corporation, to take Lands and goods to them and their Succeſſors, and that they ſhall bee the onely Projectors of all the Lands and goods in the Kingdome, and when any of that Corporation dies, *toties quoties*, the Survivor and none elſe ſhal chooſe a Succeſſor to perpetuity. And if this be binding to the Subjects (as it muſt be if your rules hold) we have ſpun a faire thred in ſending Knights and Burgeſſes to this Parliament. Indeed you have dealt gently with us (in compariſon) in taking but the Twentieth part, having ſtopt all the Kings, Queenes, and Princes Revenues, and left them to live upon Almes (which all men cry ſhame of) and we beleeve will not be well taken by our brethren of *Wales*, that you ſhould ſo uſe their Prince; how bold ſoever you make with our King, truly, we find as ſpecious preambles to theſe new Ordinances to ruine us, as to any former Projects and Monopolies, which makes us thinke ſome of the Kings Counſell at Law, are gotten into the Houſe of Commons, and under-hand for conſcience ſake, betray both us and their Maſter; and we feare ere long, if theſe courſes hold, *Iſaac Pennington* ſhall have a Monopoly of high-way paſſages at 2. s. *per Pell*, eſtabliſhed by Ordinance for the good of the people, which now he exacts without comptroll.

We beſeech you to thinke us not ſo void of reaſon, to be thus deluded, if Serjant *Wilde*, or the more learned Mr. *Glyn* avouch it for Law, we ſhall no more beleeve it upon their words, then we did his Country-man Judge *Jones*, in his opinion of Ship-money: And never pretend to us that in caſes of neceſſity you may doe what you liſt, when you pretend liberty to declare a neceſſity when you pleaſe; That were to make us in far worſe condition then the Ship-money buſineſſe, we ſhall finde too many in both Houſes full of neceſſities: And therefore we beſeech you to conſider ſeriouſly, into what deſperate

ſperate exigences we are driven, and if we finde not ſpeedy reliefe, we muſt take up ſome of your own principles for proſecuting our Reſolutions in defending our ſelves, in caſes of urgent and unavoidable neceſſity: Nay, and it is high time to doe it preſently, if you have ſent for an Army of *Scots*, (as we heare you have) to make us a Conquered People.

We ſhould weary out a patient Reader, to tell all our diſtreſſes, and how the buſineſſe of *Ireland* hath bin carried, and trenched too much upon the honour of thoſe Houſes which we ſhall ſtudy to preſerve: We forbeare therefore further enumeration in our civill calamities, as unpleaſing to our thoughts; and in a word or two tel you, how it hath fared with us in our Religion and Church-Government. God be bleſſed our Papiſts and Jeſuits pull in their heads, and good care is taken for keeping them under, but we wiſh it might be done according to the Laws (which are ſtrict enough, if well executed) and not by plundering and torturing; for if the Law be not the Rule, we, as well as they ſhall come under the ſlavery of Arbitrary Government. And to ſpeak truth, Preaching is much advanced; but what we get one way, we loſe twice as much another: for one Papiſt before, two ſeditious Sectaries and Schiſmatiques now; we would not be miſtaken in our expreſſion by [*Sectaries*] and [*Schiſmatiques*] we meane not religious and godly men or women, who make conſcience of ſanctifying the Sabbath, frequenting Gods Ordinances of praying and preaching, obſerving Family-duties, of praying and inſtructing their Families in the principles of Religion, abſtaining from all ſinne themſelves to their power, and for conſcience ſake friendly and charitably reproving others that doe offend, and in ſhort make conſcience of every ſinne, as it is an offence againſt God; No, God forbid we ſhould harbour ſuch a thought in us; we honour ſuch, and pray God encreaſe the number; and whether they be nick-named *Puritanes*, or looſe *Proteſtants*, or any other new names of ſcorn, it matters not, we are contented to ſhare with them in their diſdain; I take part with thoſe pious and learned men, *Uſher*, *Moreton*, *Brownrigge*, *Weſtfield*, though Biſhops; *Holdſworth*, *Shute*, and others, though in Priſon, or

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ſuſpected for men Popiſhly affected, or Neutraliſts: But we intend ſuch as pretend to purity without honeſty, that inveigh againſt ſwearing, and practiſe lying, cozening, and deceiving; that cannot endure Epiſcopall Government or our Book of Common Prayer, though far better then any they can frame themſelves, That would have no Government in the Church, but all to be independent; That preach, practiſe, and maintain ſedition, riſing in Arms againſt the King, Gods anointed, yea, depoſing and killing Kings, (that are not ſuch as they would have them) That take more offence at a harmleſſe Ceremony, then at zealous incontinency: Theſe are thoſe that we inveigh againſt, that are come like the plague of flies, lice, and caterpillars amongſt us, and are countenanced by no mean ones in both Houſes, that ſtick not to affirme, we have had no Reformation in *England* hitherto; and ſo make our Religion (in which we reſolve to live and die) either nothing, or hereticall, and by their impudence, cunning hypocriſie, and ſeeming holineſſe (depreſt with deſerved poverty) and hoping to catch good Fiſh in troubled waters, diſquiet our Church, and raiſe and foment diſcord in the State, and yet are ſuffered to paſſe unpuniſhed: Nay, the Laws againſt them in vilifying & diſgracing our Church-Liturgy totally ſuſpended. It may peradventure not be beleeved that ſuch a thing ſhould be, but beleeve us, a new Ordinance will do ſtrange things in Church and Common-wealth. Nay, we expect ere long to be told, that an Order of the Houſe of Commons will be an Ordinance too, at leaſt binde us by, or as a Law; for it hath been put in practice already to ſtay proceedings in Courts of Juſtice, and free a Felon out of Priſon without triall; and leſt you think wee coyn untruths (as faſt as ſome others) you ſhall finde by their Journall, where they ſtaied all men from proceeding againſt Sir *Tho. Dawes*, and diſcharged one committed by the Lord Chiefe Juſtice *Brampſton* to Newgate for Felony, in ſtealing the Counteſſe of *Rivers* goods. And we cannot forget the Order under the *Teſte* of M. *Pym*, two years ſince, for taking the Railes from the Communion-Table, when the Houſe of Commons it ſeemes had delegated their power to him (as they have done ſince to a cloſe Committee of ſafety,

a course unheard of in former times,& not more absurd then illegall and unjustifiable.) But we are told we shall have a Synod called, and a Bill passed for it, and all things shall be setled in the Church; God grant we may live to see it: for we must tell you, that we heard the Houses of Parliament intend to choose the men for the Synod (which is a device as new as the Ordinance) and that the greater number of them are those who oppose Episcopacy, and our Book of Common Prayer, which if true, we must let you know, We hold them not fit men for such a businesse; and they may spare their pains till we would have Religion & Church-Government unsettled, which hath been their work hitherto; and we must in Justice require a Synod, such as was known to former ages, and that we may not blush to own when occasion requires. This certainly should have been the first work, we pray it may be wel settled at last. But we fear in stead of Reformation we shall have some idle head or other will bee framing an Answer in writing to our Complaints, which we must tell you wil give us no satisfaction; Or we shall have a new Declaration, or Remonstrance, stuft with an old Story of too often-repeated miscarriages (for when any your Ordinances that invade our Rights are to bee put upon us, wee never misse some such thing to accompany them, and gull us) we must tell you, It is no ease to us to be told in fine words, We shall be disabused, we desire you will begin seriously to Act, and leave writing, for we find upon all your writings, you have still gone by the worst, which makes us beleeve you have not the better cause, but truth is against you, having the advantage of so many able men to pen, and an inclination on your parts to conceive the best of what you set forth, and prejudicacy to what is written in opposition. We therefore humbly and heartily desire both Houses to declare themselves for the maintaining the Booke of Common Prayer established by Law; submitting the correcting, qualifying, or altering such things, and indifferent Ceremonies, as to a Synod lawfully called shall be thought fit, and may justly give offence to weake consciences, that Lawes may be made and executed against all Schismatiques, Heretiques, and Separatists, and these already made, executed against

againſt Papiſts. That Armies may be disbanded, peace eſtabliſhed: The Scots (if ſent for) diſcharged; and our King denied nothing that is his by the known Law of the Land, but reſtored to all, and be ſuch a glorious Prince as you promiſed him. That the new Law by Ordinance, *i.e.* by Order of either or both Houſes may be aboliſhed and damned, as was that of Ship-money, and let us heare no more of a Legiſlative power, but where King, Lords, and Commons concur (for we will no more ſubmit to it then to a new Law by Proclamation) and we require that we may be ſuffered to enjoy our Lives, Liberties, and Property, according to our Petition of Right, and known Laws, and ſuffered to try our Rights without Parliament Injunctions. That theſe things may be done ſuddenly, and this Parliament diſſolved, that ſo we may have liberty to proceed at Law againſt the ſeveral Members of both Houſes, who make uſe of their Priviledge, to hinder the proceedings of Juſtice, and owe us many thouſand pounds, and that wee may have ſome fruit of the Trienniall Bill. If theſe things may not be obtained, unleſſe without breach of Priviledge, we may have the names of the firſt Projectors of theſe new Ordinances, and ſuch as labour to uphold them. Wee muſt let you know, our Reſolution is to re-aſſume the power we put into you (for wee told you before, wee muſt work upon your own principles) for you having mainly broken the truſt we repoſed in you, in ſubverting all our Lawes (which you ſhould have preſerved) we may take back what we gave you, (and we are certain, your elections are more conditionall upon that point then our Kings Crown, which comes by inheritance and ſucceſſion;) And we are ſure we have as wiſe, religious, and honeſt men left behinde, as we ſent to the Parliament. And in caſe of urgent neceſſity (which is our caſe directly) our Laws being over-turned, our eſtates and liberty loſt, our wives and children threatned to be turned out of doores, and baniſht, and our Religion endangered, we may defend our ſelves by Arms, and make uſe of what is next, and we have a preſident ſhowne by your ſelves for the manner of that defence: And ſhall not be aſhamed or afraid to adventure our eſtates and lives for

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defence of our known Laws, and true Protestant Religion, and not die slaves more to the name of a Parliament, then to any Tyrant.

We have published this before we could understand the Resolution of other Counties, the times requiring it, and could not expect their Answer: If they approve it, and joyn in it, we desire them to declare so much publiquely, and to doe as we intend to do, namely, totally oppose all new Ordinances, and maintain our Rights by our old and known Laws, assisting each other with Life and Fortune in this our Resolution, for Gods glory, our Countries good, and our own Freedome.

Finis.